

AMENDED CLAIMS PER INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT
DATED 31 JANUARY 2002

CLAIMS

- 1/ Prefabricated material in the form of a thin flexible polymer sheet for making hot-tensioned structures in
5 respective frames, such as false ceilings, in particular, the material being characterized in that it carries direct printing of designs of shapes and dimensions that are predetermined once the material is hot-tensioned.
- 10 2/ A material according to claim 1, characterized in that it is selected from the group comprising thermoplastic polymers such as plasticized polyvinyl chloride and polymers derived therefrom as superchlorinated vinyl chloride, polyvinylidene chloride, and copolymers of vinyl chloride and polyvinylidene
15 chloride.
- 3/ A material according to claim 1 or claim 2, characterized in that it is a multilayer material.
- 20 4/ A material according to any one of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that it is mono- or bi-oriented.
- 5/ A method of making a hot-tensioned false ceiling, by hot-tensioning a material of the kind presented in any one of
25 claims 1 to 4, in a false ceiling obtained by assembling rails, the method being characterized in that it comprises:
- a step of selecting designs to be printed on the material, said designs being mono- or polychromatic and being capable of being modified in shape, color, proportions, and
30 dispositions, said designs being digitized and recorded in a computer memory of a system for controlling a printing machine; and
 - a step of printing the selected design on the flexible polymer material in sheet form.

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6/ A method according to claim 5, characterized in that it includes a step of printing a final design as selected by the user on paper.

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7/ A method according to claim 6, characterized in that the printing is performed by means of a silkscreen printing machine.

10 8/ A method according to claim 6, characterized in that the printing is performed by means of a digital ink jet machine.

9/ A method according to any one of claims 6 to 8, characterized in that the printing is performed on a plurality of bonded-together strips of material, and in particular is performed over the zones in which the strips are bonded together edge to edge.

10/ A method according to any one of claims 6 to 8, characterized in that the printing is performed on each strip of material with the strips being assembled together by bonding performed after the printing.

11/ A method according to claim 10, characterized in that it includes a step of predeforming the design to be printed on the flexible polymer material, the predeformation taking account of differential lengthening of the printed material during hot-tensioning, said predeformation substantially compensating for distortion in the design caused by the material being hot-tensioned and thus ensuring that a properly proportioned design is obtained on the tensioned printed material.

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12/ A false ceiling obtained by implementing the method presented in any one of claims 5 to 11, characterized in that a catch member (5) is defined in the frame (3) of the false ceiling, the catch member being capable of receiving a margin member (4) disposed along the periphery of the sheet of flexible polymer material that is hot-tensioned in said frame (3).

10 13/ A false ceiling according to claim 12, characterized in that the margin member (4) is bonded close to the peripheral edge (7) of the tensioned sheet, said bonding being hidden from view by portions (8) of the rails of the frame (3).